



NEWS RELEASE

PRESS OFFICE

Release Date: April 14, 1999
Release Number: 99-33

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SBA EXPANDS EDUCATION TOUR TO HELP DISADVANTAGED SECURE U.S. CONTRACTS

WASHINGTON --The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) has added several new stops to an information tour that began late last year and is designed to help disadvantaged firms tap into the attractive \$200 billion-per-year federal marketplace. The seminars explain the steps needed to obtain federal certification as a small disadvantaged business (SDB).

“By July 1, any firm that qualifies as an SDB for federal subcontracting will be required to have SBA certification,” said SBA Administrator Aida Alvarez. **“Attending these seminars is simply a smart move that makes the whole process easier.”**

The expanded schedule now includes these locations:

April

13-14 Oakland, CA
21 Nashville, TN
29-30 Cleveland, OH

May

6 Miami, FL
13-14 Chicago, IL
19 Indianapolis, IN
27-28 Seattle, WA

June

3 Milwaukee, WI
10 Jackson, MS
17 New Orleans, LA
22 Research Triangle Park, NC
29 Washington, DC

July

1 San Juan, PR
7 Phoenix, AZ
13 Las Vegas, NV
15 Denver, CO

Additional information on the tour or SDB certification can be obtained by calling 1-800-558-0884, or by visiting the agency's web site at **<http://www.sba.gov/sdb>**.

The SBA, which began accepting applications Aug. 24, has already conducted seminars in 10 cities across the country since the outreach started in November. There are now nearly 6,000 certified SDBs in the agency's on-line database, PRO-Net. The list is on the Web at **<http://pro-net.sba.gov>**.

In addition to small business owners, federal contracting officials are invited to attend the seminars.

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The U.S. Small Business Administration, established in 1953, provides financial, technical and management assistance to help Americans start, run, and grow their businesses. With a portfolio of business loans, loan guarantees and disaster loans worth more than \$45 billion, SBA is the nation's largest single financial backer of small businesses. Last year, SBA offered management and technical assistance to more than one million small business owners. SBA also plays a major role in the government's disaster relief efforts by making low-interest recovery loans to both homeowners and businesses.

America's 24 million small businesses employ more than 50 percent of the private workforce, generate more than half of the nation's gross domestic product, and are the principal source of new jobs in the U.S. economy.

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